

CLAIMS

Accordingly, what is claimed is:

1. A container for swabs comprising:
  - a housing defining a chamber with an opening for receiving and containing a plurality of swabs therein;
  - a hinged lid for alternately opening and closing said opening of said housing, said lid being connected to said housing by a hinge and said lid being capable of moving in a substantially rotational motion pivoting about said hinge, moving between a closed position and an open position relative to said opening of said housing;
  - a movable internal support member movably disposed within said chamber for supporting said swabs, said support member being capable of moving between a first position in which said swabs do not substantially protrude from said opening, and a second position in which said swabs substantially protrude from said opening,
  - a mechanism linking the rotational motion of said lid to at least partially cause movement of said support member such that the support member is disposed in the first position when the lid is in the closed position and the support member is disposed in the second position when the lid is in the open position.
2. A container according to claim 1, wherein the movement of said support member is substantially translational.
3. A container according to claim 1, wherein the mechanism linking the rotational motion of the lid with movement of the support member is a lever substantially fixedly connected to said lid, and operatively connected in a movable contact relation to said support member such that as the lid is moved, the lever is

caused to move therewith in a rotational motion and the lever causes by contact movement a motion of the support member.

4. A container according to claim 3 wherein the lever creates a levering effect in its movable contact relation with said support member to move the support member by levering the support member.

5. A container according to claim 3 wherein the lever creates a camming effect in its movable contact relation with said support member to cammingly move the support member.

6. A container according to claim 3 wherein the lever creates an effect selected from the group of a levering effect and a camming effect either of which providing for moving the support member in a translational direction.

7. A container according to claim 3, wherein said support member has attached thereto at least one extension member extending towards the hinge; and wherein the lever extends from the lid adjacent the hinge, and the extension member has a recess formed therein for operatively receiving a free end of the lever therein, the free end of the lever operatively engaging the extension member via the recess, operative to transmit motion thereto.

8. A container according to claim 1,  
wherein said opening of said housing opens substantially upwardly;  
wherein said opening provides for receiving a plurality of swabs in a substantially upright position;  
wherein said support member is a bottom member for supporting the swabs in a substantially upright position; and,  
wherein said first and second positions of said support member are respective lower and upper positions within the chamber of said housing.

9. A container according to claim 8, wherein said bottom member has attached thereto at least one upright member extending upwardly towards the hinge.

10. A container according to claim 9, wherein the lid is provided with a lever extending therefrom adjacent the hinge, and the upright member is provided with a recess for receiving a free end of the lever therein.
11. A container according to claim 10, wherein said lever extends at a substantially right angle to said lid.
12. A container according to claim 11, wherein the side of the lever that faces the container is provided with a contour that ensures a smooth translation of a movement of the lid to a movement of the bottom member.
13. A container according to claim 8, wherein the movement of said bottom member is substantially translational alternately upwardly and downwardly.
14. A container according to claim 8, wherein the mechanism linking the rotational motion of the lid with movement of the support member is a lever substantially fixedly connected to said lid, and operatively connected in a movable contact relation to said support member such that as the lid is moved, the lever is caused to move therewith in a rotational motion and the lever causes by contact movement a motion of the support member.
15. A container according to claim 14 wherein the lever creates an effect selected from the group of a levering effect and a camming effect either of which providing for moving the support member in a translational direction.
16. A container according to claim 1 wherein the swabs have an absorbent end selected from the group consisting of cotton and cottonish material.
17. A swab dispensing system comprising:
  - at least one swab;
  - containing means for containing said at least one swab; said containing means including covering means for covering the at least one swab within the containing

means, the covering means being rotatably connected to the containing means to alternately open and close the containing means;

    a movable internal support means for supporting the at least one swab;

    whereby the movable internal support means is operatively mechanically linked to the covering means such that rotational movement of the covering means causes translational movement of the movable support means.

18. A method for dispensing swabs comprising:

    providing a container having at least one swab disposed therein, the container having an opening and lid rotatably connected to the container to alternately open and close the container opening; the container also having a movable internal support member disposed therein for supporting the at least one swab;

    moving the lid from a closed position to an open position, whereby the movable internal support member also moves in response to movement of the lid, the support means being operatively mechanically linked to the lid such that rotational movement of the lid causes movement of the movable support means, the movement of the lid causing a protrusion of the at least one swab from the opening of the container;

    removing at least one swab from the container.

19. A method according to claim 18 wherein the mechanical linkage of the support member to the lid is such that rotational movement of the lid causes translational movement of the movable support means.

20. A method according to claim 18 wherein the mechanical linkage of the support member to the lid is such that rotational movement of the lid causes translational movement of the movable support means, the mechanical linkage being selected from the group consisting of a lever and a cam, and the method further comprising levering or camming the support member to cause translational movement thereof.